

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
DISTRICT OF NEVADA

STEVEN GONZALEZ,

Plaintiff

v.

DIRECTOR OF NURSING H.D.S.P., et al.,

Defendants

Case No.: 2:24-cv-01399-APG-MDC

Order

Plaintiff Steven Gonzalez brings this civil-rights action under 42 U.S.C. § 1983 to redress constitutional violations that he claims he suffered while incarcerated at High Desert State Prison. ECF No. 1-1. On August 8, 2024, the Magistrate Judge ordered Gonzalez to file an application to proceed *in forma pauperis*, or pay the \$405 filing fee, by October 7, 2024. ECF No. 3. That deadline expired and Gonzalez did not file an application to proceed *in forma pauperis*, pay the \$405 filing fee, move for an extension, or otherwise respond.

I. Discussion

District courts have the inherent power to control their dockets and “[i]n the exercise of that power, they may impose sanctions including, where appropriate . . . dismissal” of a case. *Thompson v. Hous. Auth. of City of Los Angeles*, 782 F.2d 829, 831 (9th Cir. 1986). A court may dismiss an action based on a party’s failure to obey a court order or comply with local rules. *See Carey v. King*, 856 F.2d 1439, 1440-41 (9th Cir. 1988) (affirming dismissal for failure to comply with local rule requiring *pro se* plaintiffs to keep court apprised of address); *Malone v. U.S. Postal Service*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987) (dismissal for failure to comply with court order). In determining whether to dismiss an action on one of these grounds, I must consider: (1)

1 the public's interest in expeditious resolution of litigation; (2) the court's need to manage its
2 docket; (3) the risk of prejudice to the defendants; (4) the public policy favoring disposition of
3 cases on their merits; and (5) the availability of less drastic alternatives. *See In re*
4 *Phenylpropanolamine Prod. Liab. Litig.*, 460 F.3d 1217, 1226 (9th Cir. 2006) (quoting *Malone*
5 *v. U.S. Postal Serv.*, 833 F.2d 128, 130 (9th Cir. 1987)).

6 The first two factors, the public's interest in expeditiously resolving this litigation and the
7 court's interest in managing its docket, weigh in favor of dismissal of Gonzalez's claims. The
8 third factor, risk of prejudice to defendants, also weighs in favor of dismissal because a
9 presumption of injury arises from the occurrence of unreasonable delay in filing a pleading
10 ordered by the court or prosecuting an action. *See Anderson v. Air West*, 542 F.2d 522, 524 (9th
11 Cir. 1976). The fourth factor—the public policy favoring disposition of cases on their merits—is
12 greatly outweighed by the factors favoring dismissal.

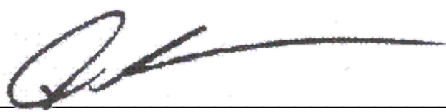
13 The fifth factor requires me to consider whether less drastic alternatives can be used to
14 correct the party's failure that brought about the court's need to consider dismissal. *See Yourish*
15 *v. Cal. Amplifier*, 191 F.3d 983, 992 (9th Cir. 1999) (explaining that considering less drastic
16 alternatives *before* the party has disobeyed a court order does not satisfy this factor); *accord*
17 *Pagtalunan v. Galaza*, 291 F.3d 639, 643 & n.4 (9th Cir. 2002) (explaining that “the persuasive
18 force of” earlier Ninth Circuit cases that “implicitly accepted pursuit of less drastic alternatives
19 prior to disobedience of the court's order as satisfying this element[,]” *i.e.*, like the “initial
20 granting of leave to amend coupled with the warning of dismissal for failure to comply[,]” have
21 been “eroded” by *Yourish*). Courts “need not exhaust every sanction short of dismissal before
22 finally dismissing a case, but must explore possible and meaningful alternatives.” *Henderson v.*
23 *Duncan*, 779 F.2d 1421, 1424 (9th Cir. 1986). Because this action cannot realistically proceed

1 until and unless Gonzalez pays the \$405 filing fee or files an application to proceed *in forma*
2 *pauperis*, the only alternative is to enter a second order setting another deadline. But the reality
3 of repeating an ignored order is that it often only delays the inevitable and squanders the court's
4 finite resources. The circumstances here do not indicate that this case will be an exception:
5 there is no hint that Gonzalez needs additional time or evidence that he did not receive the
6 court's order. Setting another deadline is not a meaningful alternative given these circumstances.
7 So the fifth factor favors dismissal.

8 **II. Conclusion**

9 Having thoroughly considered these dismissal factors, I find that they weigh in favor of
10 dismissal. I therefore ordered that this action is dismissed without prejudice based on
11 Gonzalez's failure to file a fully complete application to proceed *in forma pauperis* or pay the
12 full \$405 filing fee in compliance with the Magistrate Judge's August 8, 2024, order. The Clerk
13 of Court is directed to enter judgment accordingly and close this case. No other documents may
14 be filed in this now-closed case. If Gonzalez wishes to pursue his claims, he must file a
15 complaint in a new case.

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17 Dated: October 16, 2024

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Chief U.S. District Judge